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RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000397

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: BADR CORPS TELLS GEN. CASEY IT SUPPORTS HUMAN  
RIGHTS

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD FOR  
REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) Badr Organization General Secretary Hadi al-Amari, Badr Organization Deputy Secretary for Protection Tahsin al-Azawi, and SCIRI parliamentarian Sheikh Dhiya al-Fayyad told MNF-I Commanding General Casey and PolCouns in a February 7 meeting that the Badr Organization fully supports human rights, democracy, and the Iraqi constitution. The U.S. may not like Badr, al-Amari began, but the U.S. will have to work with it. The Badr Organization will have 15 or 16 members in the next Council of Representatives (CoR), and has no need to assassinate its political opponents, he stated flatly. The best way to ensure respect for human rights and democracy takes root in Iraq is for GOI and coalition forces (CF) to cooperate, according to al-Amari.

¶2. (C) When GEN Casey asked al-Amari about the Badr Organization's ties to Iran, al-Amari replied that the Badr Organization is not working to make Iraq an extension of Iran. Iraqis may want good relations with Iran, but that does not mean they are Iranian puppets. Al-Amari said many members of Badr Organization and SCIRI have family in Iran because they moved there after they fled Saddam, just as many Iraqis fled to the United Kingdom. Iraqis, like al-Amari, are Arabs, not Persians. Indeed, al-Amari said that, despite spending over 20 years in Iran, he speaks no Farsi. He added that his family has deep roots in the Arab peninsula. The Badr Organization, he said, takes no money from Iran; the Hakim family finances the organization from the Hakim's access to donations from the Shia faithful (khoms). The Badr Organization, he said, opposes terrorism from all sources, including Iran. When asked about former Badr Corps member turned insurgent leader Abu Mustafa al-Sheibani, al-Amari said that he had been a Badr Corps member once, but he had not heard from him since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

¶3. (C) Comment: Hadi al-Amari's comments reflect the standard SCIRI/Badr party line. While we doubt the veracity of some of his statements, such as his claim that the Badr Organization takes no money from Iran, he did declare his support for upholding human rights. As more such meetings occur, MNF-I and Post will work to convince al-Amari that such statements should be made publicly in conjunction with CF. End Comment

KHALILZAD